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## **POSITION DESCRIPTION**

### **POSITION TITLE:**

Director – Pre-K Model Education Center  
Pre-K 4 SA

### **PROFILE OF PRE-K 4 SA INITIATIVE:**

The Mayor and the voters of the City of San Antonio have taken a stand to dramatically improve the availability of high-quality early childhood opportunities for four-year olds throughout the city. Educational research shows that high-quality prekindergarten has the most impact in improving overall education outcomes for a community and helps children to learn and read on grade-level, making them less likely to fall behind their classmates and more likely to graduate and attend college.

The City of San Antonio is breaking new ground with its Pre-K initiative and expects to offer dramatically enhanced early childhood education to ensure future vitality and long-term economic health for San Antonio.

The Pre-K 4 SA initiative must first study what is already occurring in early childhood education in the city and build on the culture and history of what is there to create something demonstrably better. The first impact of the initiative will be the opening of two education centers by August 2013 – forward-reaching centers that will serve as nation-wide models for high quality early childhood education and ambitious student achievement goals.

A second core component of Pre-K 4 SA includes professional development for all early childhood educators throughout the city and thus raising the bar on teacher effectiveness. A third element of the initiative will be the awarding of competitive grants to high-quality providers of early childhood education – in traditional public schools, charters, and private schools and providers - to ensure that rigorous early childhood programs are available throughout the city.

The goals of the Pre-K 4 SA initiative are ambitious and center on improving educational outcomes for early childhood students:

- Achievement gaps reduced by at least 25% in language, 33% in math, and 90% in literacy when compared to kindergarten students who did not attend centers;
- By 3rd grade, students from the centers should have at least 10% closing of achievement gap in STAAR reading and math assessments;
- 20% to 40% reduction in special education placement and grade retention.

In order to achieve these goals, those involved in the launch of this initiative must quickly engage the fifteen school districts that reside within the City of San Antonio, along with the parents of children from across the city, and recruit expert educators throughout the country to teach in the centers. Longer term, there must be enough demonstrable success of the initiative to show the effective use of the investment made by San Antonio taxpayers.

Eventually this \$41.2 million program will directly serve 3,700 four-year old students in the four model early childhood education centers and via increased capacity from the program's grants to other high quality providers. Funding comes primarily from the increase in local sales tax rate recently approved by voters as well as from state, federal, and USDA matching dollars. A small percentage is derived from sliding scale tuition fees. For more information, visit Pre-K 4 SA's website: [www.sanantonio.gov/Manager/Pre-K4SanAntonio.aspx](http://www.sanantonio.gov/Manager/Pre-K4SanAntonio.aspx).

The Pre-K 4 SA initiative offers the chance to work with a motivated team of colleagues aiming to achieve change through innovativeness and excellence. This is an unparalleled chance to influence the direction of early childhood education, directing an early education center that aspires to be a model for the City of San Antonio, for the state of Texas, and for the nation.

The Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program and The Rockefeller Foundation have named the City of San Antonio's Pre-K 4 SA initiative a "Top 10 Metropolitan Innovations to Watch in 2013." The distinction highlights the top ten initiatives around the country in 2013 that show the most promise for creating jobs, growing regional economies, and boosting global competitiveness in the coming year. "San Antonio is distinguishing itself as a big American city willing to invest in its economic competitiveness through education," said San Antonio Mayor Julián Castro, in recognition of this distinction.

## **POSITION SUMMARY:**

The **Director – Pre-K Model Education Center (Director)** will be an outstanding instructional and operational leader who galvanizes center staff behind a common vision of excellence. S/he will be a supportive coach and her/himself a continuous learner, thereby stretching all levels of the organization to focus on continual improvement. The **Director** will keep abreast of current research and trends in best practices in early childhood education and provide leadership in incorporating findings into center practice.

The **Director** will lead the activities, operations, and continual improvement of a model early education center that focuses on all areas of development that prepare children for school success. S/he will plan and implement instruction that encourages the social, physical, emotional, linguistic, and intellectual growth of children. The **Director** will base all elements of the pre-K program on the research in and current best practices of early childhood teaching, with particular focus on early language, cognitive, and pre-reading skills. The **Director** will employ research-based instructional materials, will support and develop teachers, will use data to improve curriculum and effectiveness of teaching, will

build parent engagement and capacity to contribute to their children's educational readiness, and will gather data that demonstrates student achievement.

The **Director** will hire the best and brightest early childhood educators for this initiative -- those dedicated to the mission espoused by Pre-K 4 SA. S/he will model support and develop teachers based on data assessing their effectiveness with student achievement. In short, the **Director** will ensure that the center provides the highest quality early education to preschool-age children in order to lay the necessary foundation for kindergarten and later school success.

The **Director** will articulate the school's vision and model to the community and encourage community support and involvement in accomplishing the mission. In particular, the **Director** will develop strong relationships with parents, inviting their involvement in supporting their children's learning.

#### **LOCATION:**

San Antonio, Texas

#### **REPORTS TO:**

CEO

#### **CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The **Director** will assume the following key responsibilities:

- Provide outstanding instructional leadership. Optimize teaching strategies and curriculum support based on the latest research findings and early childhood education best practices. Monitor curriculum development and design to ensure it supports the development of pre-K vocabulary, expressive language, listening comprehension, phonological awareness, and alphabet and numbers awareness. Possesses a strong understanding of curriculum and the instructional needs of emerging English language learners.
- Cultivate exceptional center staff eager to be accountable to high expectations. Hire outstanding educators with a passion for the mission of Pre-K 4 SA. Orient new teachers, defining high expectations for instructional strategies, classroom management, and parent engagement and providing the support necessary for teachers to achieve them. Conduct training that addresses current research and best practices in effective early childhood education. Develop teachers via observation and review that identifies professional development opportunities. Make recommendations on terminations of employees if warranted. The Director may be involved in hiring 25 teachers and 25 teacher aids.
- Establish a clear culture focused on academic and performance excellence. Inspire all staff with a vision of the possibilities created for children by excellence in the center. Develop esprit de corps, include teachers in decision-making, resolve conflicts openly and effectively, and foster a "no excuses" culture where driving toward academic goals

and excellence in spite of obstacles is prized. Promote ongoing communication and team-building among staff, where all align their efforts behind the Pre-K 4 SA initiative's vision and mission.

- Provide professional leadership by using data to evaluate and improve instructional materials, teaching strategies, curriculum, and professional development. Institute ongoing assessment of student achievement through the use of program quality, teacher quality, and student progress. Build systems to ensure quality and accountability.
- Develop an annual budget for the center and analyze budget reports to manage the program within approved budget. Manage center compliance and regulatory requirements, including documentation. Manage food service, playground issues, facility issues and maintenance, interaction with school districts, and tuition receipt of paying parents.
- Manage after-school childcare services and be involved with student transportation operations.
- Encourage parent involvement and model effective engagement with parents. Aim to develop a respectful working partnership with families that capitalizes on varied parental interest and availability to support their child's early learning. The Director will need to be able to communicate with parents and ensure commitment contracts are being followed.
- Collaborate with school districts on "lab school" teacher professional development programs.
- Articulate the initiative's mission to the community; represent the center to promote ongoing community support for educational goals.

### **RELEVANT EXPERIENCE & SKILLS:**

We seek most, if not all, of the following experience and skills:

- Leading a successful school, with demonstrated strength in all operational aspects. Proven effectiveness at managing a center in start-up as well as more established stage.
- Knowledge of child growth and development; best practices in early childhood education; and curriculum design, implementation, evaluation, and refinement.
- A track record of notable achievement in improving a diverse group of pre-school learners' academic performance; is inspired by helping children meet their potential.
- Proficiency managing staff. Demonstrated record of excellence in hiring. Has supervised, trained, evaluated, retained, and dismissed teachers.
- Brings an understanding of effective teaching; able to observe teachers in the classroom, diagnose key opportunities for improvement, and instill and/or encourage teachers' eagerness to further develop their effectiveness.
- Particular focus on data. Has observed teachers' effectiveness at gearing learning opportunities to children's developmental needs, interests, and experience. Has

customized teacher professional development based on classroom observation. Has assessed student progress in social, physical, emotional, linguistic, and intellectual areas. Has assessed student approaches to learning, such as curiosity, persistence, and self-regulation.

- Experience in selecting, adjusting and implementing student curricula.
- Has managed high-quality teacher training that contributed both to teacher excellence (as measured by student achievement results) and to teacher job satisfaction and retention.
- Has set and managed a budget. Knowledge of funding, taxation, and Texas education law helpful. Experience with regulatory and compliance issues.
- Experience working with families and understands the value in cultivating parent outreach and partnerships.
- Principal certification, ideally but not necessarily in Texas.

#### **IDEAL ATTRIBUTES:**

The successful candidate should bring some, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- A deep commitment to providing excellence. A clear understanding that quality of education services impacts student achievement.
- A core and powerful belief that every child can succeed; in short, a passion for Pre-K 4 SA's mission of improving the quality of early childhood education for all children in San Antonio.
- A fundamental belief that the best educational outcomes are a product of the efforts of early childhood educators in partnership with the student's family.
- An ability to quickly build relationships – with staff, parents, superintendents and other district-level faculty, and community. Encourage open communication between faculty, students, parents and the community.
- A love of learning, curiosity; not a "clearly know/ already doing" orientation.
- Able to discern when to adapt school practices based on changing student or other stakeholder needs versus when to hold firm in the face of challenges.
- Is happy to be held accountable. Is outcome-driven, and strives consistently for highest program quality and research-based practices. Models a "do-whatever-it-takes" orientation to meeting goals and making things happen.
- An orientation toward innovation. Able to solve issues in a complex and decentralized environment.
- Energetic self-starter, comfortable working in an environment characterized by its fast pace and entrepreneurial spirit.

- Excellent organizational skills.
- Is articulate and compelling in both written and oral presentation.
- Knowledge of technology, including how it is used to improve children's learning outcomes; a willingness to use technology in education centers.
- Encourages open communication between faculty, parents and the community.
- Communication skills in Spanish desirable.

### **COMPENSATION:**

A competitive compensation package will be designed to attract a superior candidate.

**Note:** The preceding Position Description represents our best understanding of the needs of the client at the initiation of this project. It is likely that the client will reconfigure the ultimate responsibilities of the target position with respect to the successful candidate's background and abilities and/or evolving business conditions. The final title and duties of this position will be determined during ensuing discussions and research.

As the search progresses, submission of information concerning professional experience and educational background will be required of potential candidates. The search consultant will assess the suitability of each potential candidate using this information, which must include a complete history of employment experience (names of employers, dates of employment, relevant assignments and accomplishments), educational qualifications (including institutions attended and dates/details of degrees attained), and any other facts which are pertinent to the position. The consideration of individuals for the position will be curtailed if they fail to provide full and truthful written and verbal disclosure of their histories. 2/7/13

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